# SHOE SHINES, SLUMMING AND SHINELESS SALOONS

## Dan Grows Restless Even With Such Excitement as Wild Checker Games Afford and Sets Forth for the Bowery

By DAN CAREY.

OUR life in New York has been much too respectable. We have been dealing with subways and buses, Fifth avenue and old clothes, painting (both face and canvas), art, music and books until the finer things of life have begun to pall on us and we now seek the slums. We have been living a daylight life and we never can be aught but pious in the morning and a slow worker at a matinee. But when night comes on and with it the dress suit, the lawn tie and the white vest: Oh, you kid!

So we decided to go slumming and give our real nature, which had been too long repressed, a chance to assert itself. Shakespeare writes into the third act of Hamlet:

"'Tis now the very witching hour of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world."

By which lines we know that Shakespeare was not only a poet but a major prophet of no mean ability. He evidently foresaw what would happen to the world when the electric light had been perfected. There is a theory of existence, upon which the preachers like to dwell, which has it that every man will be held responsible for the crimes that are committed and the vices that are rampant as a result of acts of his. If this theory be correct, we do not envy Mr. Edison. When he gave the world the electric light he started the night life of the big cities. He is responsible for gay white ways and cabarets, for lobster Newburg and Metropolitan opera, for movies, late hours and recalcitrant husbands.

There was a time in the history of the world, described by Butler in *Hudibras*, when he said:

"Night is the Sabbath of mankind
To rest the body and the mind."

It seems amusing now to quote a line such as that, doesn't it? Why, we are just getting a good running start in this day and time when night comes on, and from then until the alarm clock should madden us at 11 o'clock the next morning we whoop 'em up. (That is, of course, so I've been told).

What is responsible? Why, the electric light, that's what. Mr. Edison's sin, illuminating the world.

We were saying there was a time in the history of the world when we fell to quoting. Well, there was a time when those who dared to venture abroad at night carried with them not only a supply of lanterns but also a guard to protect them. Those were the happy days for the wives, because it was a very limited number of men who could afford the lanterns, and only the extremely rich (probably malefactors of great wealth) could afford the guards. The consequence was that husbands used to brag to each other about the warmth of their firesides and the lovingness of their wives instead of about the comfort of their clubs and the affection of chorus girls.

Then came along Mr. Edison—but we forbear.

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SO we decided to go slumming.

Now we reside in the entirely respectable and effete village of Chelsea, where the most exciting thing in the settlement is the corner saloon and the most sensational thing in the saloon is a game of checkers. Any time you go into the place the barkeep will willingly engage you in a game of checkers. We have seen the neighborhood bums engaging in a ribald evening in the place recently disputing about who is the best player, and recalling what took place the evening before when Joe jumped two of Tom's kings and a man beside simply by moving one space. We have no intention of being an informer to the police department (the fate of Carey, the informer, is well known), but we do feel that Mr. Enright ought to know about these games of checkers that are taking place in order that he may put a stop to them. Why, we have actually seen men laughing over moves that were made, and drinking ginger ale, too, all the while. It is positively disgusting the way men continue to seek enjoyment in utter defiance of the law and despite the efforts of the reformers to keep them from smiling.

Well, anyway, because we live in Chelsea we knew there were no slums there, so we decided to go over to the Bowery, about which we had heard so much.

In order to impress the denizens of the Bowery that we were not of them but merely among them we employed Frank, the efficient Italian bootblack, to put what he calls his Garibaldi shine on our shoes. Frank wields a wicked cloth on the toe of a shoe, and all the time that he is polishing one is getting visions of Italian sunsets and smoking volcanoes, sunlit fields and vendettas. One gets all this for a dime.

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IT'S different with the Greeks. We went into a Greek place the other day to get our shoes shined. By observing the cashier carefully we fathomed the system. Any man who merely paid for what he had bought and failed to tip the bootblack was cursed, insulted and berated after he had left the place. Those who gave tips had pleasant remarks made about them and they were bowed out as if they were kings (that is, if we understand the system of bowing out kings as it is practised in America). It was all done for the benefit of those of us who remained in the place. We looked around to see if any one knew us. No one did, so we did not care what they said about us after we were gone. We know, however, that we got ours. Ah, well. They didn't say anything more about us than we thought about them, so it is a draw.

It reminds us of the story of a young newspaper man we once knew who was a cub reporter under Julian Harris, now co-owner with that Southern prince Tom Loyless of the Columbus (Ga.) *Enquirer-Sun*. Julian has a heart of gold and a sunny disposition, but he is rather business-like during business hours. We know, because he once fired us when he was our city editor, but that is another story.

Anyway, Julian was terribly hard on this cub, to such an extent that we told the young fellow the way to make Julian stop was to talk right back to him and give him back as good as he sent. The following morning we overheard Julian being almost vituperative in the bitterness of his sarcasm in commenting upon the egregious errors of the cub.

"Bobby," we said later in the morning (that was his real name, too), "go after him, son. Tell him about it when he talks to you that way. He'll quit."

The next morning we saw Bobby again.

"Did you tell Julian where he 'got off'? we inquired.

"I sure did," replied Bobby. (They never say "surely" in the South.)

"What did he do?" we asked.

"Well, you see," responded Bobby, "he doesn't know it—yet. I didn't say anything to his face, but when I went home last night I gave him hell in my diary."

Bobby missed his calling. He ought to have been a Greek bootblack.

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THIS tipping business is a constant source of wonderment. Only one class of people have been able to get away with it. Of course we refer to waiters. The barbers are trying to claim tips, but with only minor success, and the bootblacks are not at all successful. The waiters, however, have perfected the system to the point where they feel justified in insulting you if you do not give them at least 15 or 20 per cent. of what you pay the restaurant. It is a grand thing. We are absolutely in favor of tipping. We think Mr. Harding should be permitted to say to each citizen of the United States:

"I have received $75,000 for serving you this year, but that merely comes from Congress. Each of you now owes me $7,500."

So it is with the waiter. One goes into a restaurant and pays from 35 cents to 75 cents for two eggs that have been bought at 25 or 30 cents a dozen, from 10 cents to 25 cents for a cup of coffee that costs 2 cents, pays a cover charge because they give you a napkin when you eat, and 50 cents additional for the privilege of seeing a lot of fat people learning to dance, and then the waiter comes along and raises merry cain unless you pay him something in addition to his salary because of the part he has played in "blackjacking" you for the benefit of the proprietor.

And yet they send a couple of pikers like Hettrick and Brindell to prison.

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WELL, as we were saying, we bought a shine and left the saloon over in Chelsea Village to see the slum life of the Bowery. The saloons are not what they used to be. There was a time when you could spend a whole evening in a saloon, leaving just ahead of the broom when the porter swept the place out, and then go home to your wife and be perfectly innocent in saying that you did not know how late it was. That was then. Now any man who says time passes quickly in a saloon is deceiving his wife, and the quicker the dear girl finds it out the better it will be for all parties concerned.

Of course, in the old days it was different. Then we could start an argument at 4 o'clock in the afternoon which would remain unsettled at 1 o'clock in the morning, and call for a session the next evening. But that was then.

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WELL, we had started to the Bowery to see the slums, so we got on a street car and started. We had on all the finery we possessed. That is very frequently a mistake. So many men believe in putting their best foot forward, when as a matter of fact the best foot should be held in reserve always to confound those who are simple minded enough to believe that we are guided by the old proverb. We are reminded of what took place in Judge Andy Calhoun's court, down in Atlanta, on one occasion. We were sitting as a reporter when a young negro woman from Darktown was tried. She was a "sassy nigger" and didn't care who knew it.

"Amanda Thomas," called the clerk, as she came through the door from the prisoners' room, "and the charge is drunk and disorderly."

"Guiltee-e-e-e, guiltee-e-e-e," exclaimed Amanda in a high monotone as she advanced toward the Judge's desk, with one hand over her head as if she were a slave approaching the court of Imperial Cæsar.

"What do you mean by pleading guilty?" asked Judge Andy.

"I des means dat I wuz drunk on purpose," she replied, using her words with little jerks, "and I also means dat ef I knows what 'disorderly' is I sho wuz disorderly. What yo' gwine do erbout it?"

"Why, I am going to give you thirty days without a fine," replied Judge Andy in a very dignified manner.

"Is dat all yo' can do?" asked Amanda, placing just sufficient emphasis on "you" to let her hearers know that she expected more and was astounded at the limitations of the court.

"No, Amanda," replied Judge Andy in a very dignified manner. "I can, if I wish, separate the charges, making one for being drunk and one for disorderly conduct, and sentence you to thirty days in the stockade without a fine in each case."

"Den do it, do it," replied Amanda with ineffable scorn in her voice and with the quintessence of impudence in her tone.

"All right, I'll do so," responded the judge, and he directed the clerk to make two separate charges, one for being drunk and the other for disorderly conduct and to enter a sentence of thirty days without a fine in each case.

"Is dat all yo' kin do?" asked Amanda banteringly.

"No," replied Judge Calhoun. "It is not. I can sentence you to ten days in the station house for contempt of court."

"Well, do it, man, do it," answered Amanda with a shake of her body, "'cause I sho has contempt for dis court."

Judge Calhoun promptly sentenced her to ten days for contempt of court.

"Is dat all yo' can do?" asked Amanda.

"That's all," replied the judge.

"An' no matter what I does yo' can't do nothin' else to me?" she inquired.

"Not a thing," replied Judge Andy.

Amanda, reassured, squared herself and placed both hands on her hips.

"Now, den," she said, deliberately, "Yo' old bald headed scoundrel, ain't yo' sorry yo' didn't hold somethin' back?"

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IT was too late to go slumming by this time so we returned to Chelsea Village and to our humble couch and in doing so we passed through Greenwich. Some day we are going to have something to say about Greenwich Village. Frankly we like the place. One has to look very closely to observe where Chelsea ends and Greenwich begins and sometimes a man will get the two of them mixed up to his detriment.

It reminds us of a story Dave Gillespie once told us about an experiment he made with dogs. Dave is Park Commissioner of Atlanta as a means of livelihood, but in his saner moments he is a bird and rabbit hunter.

The most sensational thing in the saloon is a game of checkers.

## Quest of Thrills Proves Mighty Inspiring and Leads to a Speculative Consideration of Greenwich Village

He had a red bone hound that was mighty keen on the scent and Dave had caught many a rabbit with him. A friend of his had a greyhound that had done jack rabbit hunting in Texas and had developed wonderful speed. Dave conceived the idea of crossing the breeds and developing a dog with the nose of a red bone and the speed of a greyhound, and with this animal he proposed to utterly destroy the rabbit family of Georgia.

The crossing was done successfully, but when the pup came along to hunting time disaster developed. The pup had inherited only the eagerness of a red bone without his scent, and the speed of a greyhound without his keen sight, so on the very first hunt he butted out his brains against a tree while following a rabbit and that was the end of Dave's wonderful breed.

So don't try to mix up Chelsea and Greenwich. A lot of people have found it to be disastrous.

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### Our Own Book Review.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK, a tragedy, by William Shakespeare. London. Henry Smithers & Co., Ltd., Liverpool.

IF the moving picture producers have it in mind to present "Hamlet" to a bored and suffering public they had better hurry, because the play would not have a chance before any well organized board of censors. Every one admits that our lives are governed largely by what we see on the screens of the theatres. If Charley Chaplin hits some one in the eye with a custard pie we are immediately seized with a desire to do likewise, and many a family tilt has been started because an impressionable wife has spent the afternoon in a movie; when Fatty Arbuckle falls down stairs a couple of times we maintain our equilibrium with extreme difficulty; when Doug. Fairbanks takes his wife in his arms and loves her so do we (ours, of course, not his), and so it goes. The consequence is that when we see murders on the stage our very natural impulse is to go forth and snuff out the lives of a few innocent and unsuspecting fellow citizens.

The story of Hamlet is the record of a crime wave among the upper classes that swept over the Kingdom of Denmark during the reign of Claudius. Nearly every one was murdered. Claudius really started the whole affair by killing King Hamlet, which he accomplished by pouring poison in his ear.

One dead.

Claudius then married Gertrude, the widowed queen, a couple of months later, being a fast worker among the ladies, thereby causing Prince Hamlet, the only son of the late lamented, to acquire a permanent grouch. Of course the first thing he did was to have a row with his best girl, one Miss Ophelia Polonious, although he did later write her a letter so full of extravagant terms of passion that she showed it to her father, who thereupon coined that famous phrase, "You said it, Prince," which later came into general use.

Prince Hamlet became so melancholy after the quarrel with Miss Ophelia that he wrote a play which was produced at the palace and which was such a rotten play that King Claudius decided to send him to England to be put to death. Hamlet, being a wise bird, changed the letter of instructions about his death by rubbing out his own name and substituting those of the two splendid young men who had him in charge, thus eliminating them from the play and causing their unexpected demise soon after they reached Blighty.

Three dead.

Then Hamlet assassinated Mr. Polonius by running him through with a rapier through a curtain behind which the old fellow had concealed himself in order to eavesdrop on a conversation between Hamlet and his mother.

Four dead.

Miss Ophelia decides to become a flower girl and she goes gayly singing among her friends asking them to buy, but they do not take her seriously, and she has very little success in her business venture. She finally falls in the river while gathering garlands and is drowned.

Five dead.

At the funeral Laertes, her brother, jumps in the grave. Hamlet gets jealous, thinking that the brother is trying to show him up as a piker in the grieving business, but he cannot think of anything original that would show greater grief than Laertes has shown, so in he jumps too, and they stage a fight without rules on top of the coffin in the grave, to the delight of the spectators. It is a draw, however, so they shake hands and decide to become friends.

Later they engage in a fencing contest, but Laertes decides it will be a good joke to put poison on the end of his sword. While they are fencing gayly Queen Gertrude, thinking it is hootch, drinks some of the poison which Laertes has carelessly left on the table and dies.

Six dead.

Laertes sticks Hamlet with the poisoned sword. They exchange swords and Hamlet sticks Laertes. The latter then confesses about the poison and dies.

Seven dead.

Hamlet runs King Claudius through the body with the poisoned sword and he dies.

Eight dead.

Mr. Horatio, a friend of Hamlet's, observing that the very best people were dying rapidly, wishes to be included in the list of fashionables and seeks to die, but Hamlet points out to him that somebody will have to stay alive in order to tell the story to Mr. Shakespeare, the playwright, and Horatio unselfishly agrees to live a little longer in order that the story may not be lost to literature.

Hamlet then dies.

Nine dead.

The curtain falls with the stage all cluttered up with corpses.

Mr. Shakespeare might have saved himself a lot of trouble and the theatregoing public a lot of time by the simple expedient of having Horatio throw a bomb at the whole crowd in the first act, which would have attained at once the same result that now requires an entire evening.

# True Stories of City Life That Rival Usual Fiction

By FRANK VREELAND.

IT is customary to start off genre studies of life by stating that "this is a story O. Henry might have written," indicating that the writer will now go O. Henry one better. So it may here be stated with the full sanction of precedent that this story, which actually happened, might have been written by O. Henry—and let his literary executors take the consequences.

A young man, well dressed, good looking and nicely mannered saw a young woman similarly blessed by fate straining the eyesight of the other young men at a fashionable summer place. After she had spent several days posing around in handsome and striking gowns that must have cost a small fortune merely to think of, he managed to obtain an introduction to the young woman, who proved to be even more of a ravishing beauty on close inspection, with classically regular features that seemed to have been imported direct from some foreign country.

She explained that she had, in fact, been born abroad, but he thought nothing of that, as she had grown up here and America could rightfully claim the credit for having ripened her charms. As each bore the evidence of moving in the same highly solvent and highly social circles there was nothing to prevent their falling in love, which they very promptly did.

When the young man proposed to her—fill in the moon, the roses and the mosquitoes to suit your taste—she accepted him without a struggle. It was a case of matrimony made easy. A few days after they met they were married, and once more it seemed that romance could flourish even where Cupid was furnished with a substantial check book.

After a brief honeymoon, the bride took the young man to her home in Hoboken, and there the first blow fell. It was not because her residence was in Hoboken but because it was of such a meanly shabby appearance, with no signs, either, that the family simply lived in it to hoard money. The only thing they appeared to have hoarded was a large and unmannerly brood of unkempt brothers and sisters, and the mother looked as though she had just come in from helping the mule drag the plough across the field.

When the bridegroom insinuated to his bride that there was an apparent discrepancy between her home and the signs of wealth she had displayed at the fashionable resort she explained that the family had been well off—in the dim and glorious past—but that her father, who had been attached to a foreign embassy here, had passed on and left them endowed with nothing but their good looks. Not having been trained to set the world on fire in any other way, she was now working as a cloak model. The prominent costumers for whom she stood around paid her little enough, goodness knows, considering her looks and the elegant way she stood around, but at least they had had the grace to defray her expenses at the high priced hotel where she met him—but merely for the sordid reason that she displayed their gowns, furnished gratis, to full advantage and set the smart set to making mental reservations about them.

"But, ah, mon cheri," she gurgled, "it is all right so long as you have your fortune." The young man's jaw sagged some more, though it seemed to have been permanently displaced as far as possible by the first shock.

"Well, to tell the truth," he faltered, "I haven't any fortune, unless—er—you want to consider my face in that class. I have—er—a fairly comfortable home in the suburbs—with my mother. And I—er—work in a store, and my salary is hardly sufficient to keep either of us in the style to which we have not been accustomed."

The ravishing beauty nearly bent her features out of shape in the ensuing convulsions, so he did not trouble to tell her that for the past few years he had saved up his money for twelve months for a couple of weeks' splash at some prominent haunt of the leisure class, looking the field over for the most beautiful entry who was backed by the largest bank.

Now they are living unhappily ever after, for a marriage has a way of remaining fixed except in Reno and the South Sea Islands. The grittiest irony of fate in it all is that the young man had previously had an opportunity to marry a nice girl living near him who was the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in the suburbs, but he hadn't considered her pretty enough, and had preferred trying his luck at Palm Beach and Newport.

He had tried it till he strained it.

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PROBABLY inspired by the merry month of May, a certain guard on the subway has taken to cultivating his soul by means of the mouth organ. While the train is waiting at South Ferry—apparently for the next boat from Europe—he sits down, takes out his harmonica and woos the Muse. She proves to be rather wheezy, perhaps from a spring cold. The passengers are regaled with selections from the latest musical comedy hits and popular songs that are beginning to give them the jim-jams, but none of them rises and asserts his manhood, even when the virtuoso guard chokes a whole passage to death.

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IT isn't always safe to carry your own booze around with you, regardless of whether you have sworn, soberly enough, never to treat any one else and you feel confident you're too slick to let the police or the revenooers stick a finger in it.

The other day at a restaurant a party who had just finished their meal and were about to go away and digest it, tipped the waiter so heavily he showed no offence when they asked him for a couple of additional glasses of water. Obligingly he toddled to an adjoining table and took away the water bottle, while the couple there gasped and regarded his action with dismay that seemed wasted on a mere bottle of water. When the party tasted the liquid poured out for them they gasped and looked delighted.

"It's gin!" they gurgled, and drank it at a gulp. The couple at the next table had surreptitiously poured into the carafe what amounted to the savings of a lifetime. The dose was so strong on weak stomachs—weakened by prohibition—that the party wobbled a bit as they left. And the obliging waiter had done himself out of another tip.

## Honeymoon in Hoboken Brings Revelations That Shatter a Romance

## As Things Look to Mr. Goslington

I FIND that a good, square, ample, satisfying meal will, for a time at least, drive away care entirely; and it does seem as if with this sufficient proof of care's utterly unsubstantial nature we ought to be able to stand off the flimsy phantom even when we are hungry.

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I suppose there is hardly any of us but what has a streak of pay ore in him, but if it's a bit refractory many of us lack the energy to work it.

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And that seems too bad, because a man doesn't know what he can do until he tries, and he is likely to be a better man than he thinks. Witness the fact that when a man does get a chance he is pretty sure to make good. True, the men who get the chances are likely to be selected men, who have shown that they have the stuff in them; but any man can qualify in this class by energetic, devoted hard work.

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It is a good thing to have what is called an education; but as between the man with Greek alone and the man without it but with brains and determination it would be easy to say which would go farther, as many able men have shown.

Don't waste time bewailing your lack of education!

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"I don't know when any little thing has startled me more," said Uncle Jabez, sitting here in the chair next to me. "I was reading along here in the paper just now," he says, "when I came to a big exclamation point that certainly didn't belong there. I thought it must be a typographical mistake; but as I looked at it that exclamation point unfolded a pair of wings and flew away. Then I exclaimed myself," and, having said that, Uncle Jabez pulled his spectacles down over his nose again and went on reading.